

4. BERLIN. Legere sends.

Last night about twenty Soviet tanks ~~(book move)~~<sup>moved</sup> into  
concealed area off Unter den Linden where they remained. At Berlin<sup>to day's</sup>  
Task Force meeting ~~[this morning]~~ Kohler very nervous about ~~[possibility]~~  
~~of~~ further US MP-armed escorts, one more of which will probably  
take place today. Kohler believes ~~[that]~~ presence of Soviet tanks & few  
blocks from Friedrichstrasse plus certain isolated phrases in Soviet  
Commandant's recent replies to protests indicate we have flushed out  
Soviets on ~~matter of~~ their continuing responsibility East Berlin.  
He added that even if Friedrichstrasse were closed, any tank probe  
action was ruled out because of strongly negative UK position presented  
Ambassadorial Group yesterday, and seemed rather grateful for this UK  
position, noting: "This ~~is~~ not an issue on which we wish to become  
engaged." Nitze noted that, although McNamara<sup>apparently</sup> did not agree, ~~[the]~~ JCS  
feels ~~that~~ changing probe procedure now, under pressure and in ~~the~~ wake  
~~of Ambassador~~ Thompson's demarche in Moscow, would be worst possible time.

Kohler felt ~~[that]~~ even physical closing Friedrichstrasse would not

materially alter situation, although ~~[it would]~~ without being contradicted

*lighted*

that our acceptance of physical closure would erode ~~remaining approxi-~~ *remains of our*

~~mately 15 percent of our~~ position concerning free ~~access~~ *circulation* within Berlin.

Prospect is for some State-Defense consultation this afternoon, possibly

tied in ~~[as 1700]~~ <sup>1700</sup> to meeting with President on different subject. Meanwhile

Dowling recommends continuing "probes" despite risks, and Lightner reports

highly favorable reactions among Berlin political leaders and prominent

journalists over firmness US position so far.